

Gulf of Mexico Alliance Environmental Education Network Steering Committee

Conference Call Monday, December 4, 2006

Steering Committee Attendees:

Sharon Hayes, EPA Gulf of Mexico Program
Phillip Hinesley, AL Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources, Coastal Section
Wendy Sera, NOAA Special Projects Office
Sharon Walker, Univ. of Southern Mississippi
Lee Yokel, GOMA Environmental Education Coordinator

This was the first call post-development of the Environmental Education Network Organization.

Current Homework

1. EEC to contact four approved nominees for open slots on the Steering Committee to find out if they are able to be involved.
2. EEC to convene the next Steering Committee conference call in January to establish the quarterly pattern with the new committee members in attendance.
3. EEC to work with the Special Projects office to answer website questions and set a date for development.

Acronyms

GOMA = Gulf of Mexico Alliance
EEN = Environmental Education Network
EEC = Environmental Education Coordinator

Agenda General Notes

1. Approve members to open spots on the Steering Committee

Call attendees discussed the open positions on the Steering Committee and those members who had been nominated or suggested to the positions. It was noted that when choosing members, the following considerations should be made:

- equal representation by state; don't want to bias one state
- good to have representative for states not as active
- balance of organization types
- watershed connections

Four individuals were approved for the four open positions:

Tara Shultz, Texas State Aquarium
Gaye Farris, USGS National Wetlands Research Center, Louisiana
Bryan Fluech, Florida Sea Grant
Quenton Dokken, Gulf of Mexico Foundation, Texas – for international position

In addition, several other individuals were under consideration for positions. These included Ralph Rayburn, Texas Sea Grant; Jessica Kastler, LUMCON; Diane Lindstedt, Louisiana Sea Grant; Debbie Berger, The Florida Aquarium; Jennifer Buchanan, Mississippi Grand Bay NERR; and Tabitha Whalen-Stadler, Florida Rookery Bay NERR.

The group also considered the ability of Rick Tinnin, the appointed Texas environmental education representative, to participate fully given his concurrent commitment load. The EEC will contact Rick to explore options for representation.

2. Discuss leadership for the Steering Committee

A short discussion was held to discuss Steering Committee involvement and for more direction from the State leads. This direction should be in the form of leadership to other members of the EEN as well as supporting the Environmental Education Coordinator in ongoing efforts. Sharon Hayes and Wendy Sera offered their institutional support but it was noted that some direction needed to be provided by the states. Sharon Walker offered to function as a “pseudo co-chair” to the EEC to help push various activities along.

3. & 4. Discuss & review actions to date within the EEN – next steps

Discuss dates for EEN Workshop and location

The group discussed the actions that were currently underway by the EEN and the EEC. The EEC discussed the distinction between various inventories and background information that was currently being collected.

It was noted that other Priority Issue Teams were having face to face meetings. A short discussion of another EEN workshop was noted but no dates or ideas were put forward. The need to partner with other organizations (GCOOS, COSEE, etc.) was noted. This would be useful for a large gathering to take advantage of overlapping memberships and actions.

It was suggested that a first step would be to convene the Steering Committee as a decision making body with the website development Working Group and NOAA’s Special Projects Office. The date, time, and place for that coordination would be determined by the EEC with hopes for a Spring Quarter 07 meeting.

5. Set date for next call

It was recommended to begin the regularly scheduled quarterly calls in January with the new Steering Committee members. **The next date: Monday, January 22, 2007 2PM CST.**